

1. Can I purchase gift certificates to give to families to meet unmet needs?

Gift certificates can be used if you ensure the following:

- *The certificate states specifically what it can be used to purchase (ie. 16-inch box fan)*
- *The certificate has an expiration date that falls within the program's fiscal year (July 1 – June 30)*
- *The certificate is non-transferable, cannot be redeemed for cash or bartered.*

2. When is the last possible date for submitting a Budget Amendment?

June 1 of the program year

3. Do the FaDSS rules and policies apply to our FaDSS local match money?

Yes, once you use local money as a match with federal or state funds the strictest rules apply.

4. Why do the state fiscal monitors question us when we pay for staff meals?

Staff meals can be paid for with FaDSS money only if one of the following circumstances applies:

- *The meal was part of a travel expense for the staff*
- *The meal was offered in conjunction with a staff meeting or training*
- *The meal was part of an activity with a family*

In all cases, documentation needs to clearly state the purpose of the expense. Best practice would be to attach a copy of the meeting or training agenda to the meal expense.

5. Can we buy supplies from third party monies for a parent fundraiser?

Yes, again you need to clearly document the reason for the purchase.

You will also need to ensure that the money raised is allocated to the third party line item.

6. Why can't we buy flowers for families or staff?

Please keep in mind that this is the taxpayer's money. It would be more appropriate to take up a collection in your office to send flowers to someone instead of using taxpayer's dollars.

7. Why can't we pay for criminal or civil fines, late fees or other penalties?

They are the natural consequence for action or inaction on part of the person that is fined or assessed a penalty. The fine or penalty is supposed to be a deterrent for committing the act again. FaDSS should not interfere with natural consequences. FaDSS could assist the family with other household bills that would allow the family to pay for their own fine or penalty.

8. How many copies of the monthly expenditure report must I submit to the Department of Human Rights for payment?

You must submit the original and one copy. An expenditure report is a duplex report (printing on the front and back.) The face of the report is the PO/PV1. The back side of the report is the Monthly Funding Request and Expenditure Report. The Expenditure Report itemizes the expenditure activity during the month.

9. Can the Department of Human Rights process our claim when the cumulative expenditures plus projected costs exceed 110%?

DHR monitors expenditures by cost category. The fiscal officer at the FaDSS agency will be contacted whenever a cost category exceeds 110% of the budget amount. If an amendment has not been granted 30 days prior to the receipt of the expenditure report, the figures must be revised to equal less than 110%. The fiscal officer is encouraged to file for an amendment as soon as possible.

10. Can we buy gifts for families?

You can only use local funds to buy gifts for families. Buying a small gift to recognize a family achievement or milestone may be appropriate. The content of the gift may cause the cost to be questioned if it seems inappropriate. For example a rated R video would be an inappropriate gift. (See FAQ number one regarding gift certificates.)

11. Can we buy rolls of postage stamps?

Rolls of postage stamps can be purchased if you do not have a postal machine. You will need to keep a postage stamp log that records the date, number of stamps used, and staff person. You should also include the name of the person you are sending the mail. In the case of a FaDSS participant, you can use the first initial and last name. The auditors may request to review the log.

12. Can we pay for car repairs?

A best practice would be to determine if there any other resources for paying for the car repair first including the family resources. The grantee should take reasonable steps to ensure that if the car is repaired that the family has auto insurance that meets the Iowa law and that the person driving the car has a valid Iowa driver's license.

13. Can we use FaDSS funds to pay for family support groups?

You are typically able to use FaDSS funds to pay for FaDSS group meetings or support groups. Your support group's purpose should support the mission of the FaDSS program. If you are financially supporting or endorsing a group meeting, keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Culturally appropriate in all aspects*
- All family members have the same opportunity to participate*
- If food is provided, the selection is nutritious*
- Meeting space is accessible to persons with disabilities*
- Requests for accommodations are provided*

- *If childcare is provided, the childcare providers are adults or at a minimum supervised by adults and the childcare environment is safe and appropriate for the age group of children in care.*

14. All claims for payment under the FaDSS contract if they are related to an individual family must have the name of the family on it (first initial and last name is sufficient). In lieu of this, you may attach an internal form that explains to whom the assistance is given and why it was necessary.

Always remember....

1. ***Document, Document, Document!*** *Attach supporting documentation or write on the receipt the purpose of the purchase.*
2. ***This is the taxpayer's money.*** *We must all be good stewards and be fiscally responsible with their money. Remember their primary investment in the FaDSS program is to reach the outcome of families becoming self-sufficient. Use that as a guiding principle in your stewardship of the dollars allocated for FaDSS.*
3. ***Your Agency or Agency Auditor's may have more strict guidelines for you to follow.***

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